



Sen. Kate Kelly and Rep. Eric Anderson address Idaho's energy policies and legislation at the first EPI Summit held in Boise.

Energy Policy Summit generates research ideas

by [Marilyn Whitney](#), INL Communications & Public Affairs



Generation and transmission of Idaho's renewable energy resources was one of the summit's featured topics.

Energy experts recently gathered in Boise to discuss research projects that could help leaders develop effective energy policy for the state and region. The Energy Policy Institute (EPI) held its first summit at Boise State University March 12-13. Sponsored by the Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES) and the Idaho Office of Energy Resources, the summit brought together faculty and researchers from the four CAES institutions — Boise State University, Idaho State University, University of Idaho and Idaho National Laboratory. Sponsors plan to hold the summit annually.

The first day of the summit was open to the public and featured presentations by a diverse group of experts and leaders who provided their perspectives on Idaho's energy issues. Speakers included legislators, the Idaho Office of Energy Resources, utility representatives, regulators, the transportation sector and the environmental community. They addressed energy issues for the nation and the state with emphasis on Idaho's significant energy resources as well as challenges. Effectively addressing energy generation, transmission, transportation and the environment are critical to the state's economic growth, job creation and rural development.

Idaho National Laboratory Director John Grossenbacher delivered the keynote address on the role science and technology play in decisions on energy policy. "The issue of energy technology and public policy is of great importance to our economic and environmental future," he said. "How do we want to produce, distribute and consume energy? What legislation, international agreements, public spending, economic incentives, taxes and other public policy instruments will be effective in getting us to collectively produce, distribute and consume in a way we are happy with today and tomorrow? I expect this EPI summit to be a tool that can serve the public interest by providing insights, analysis and an appropriate forum to consider these questions."

Sen. Kate Kelly (Dist. 18) and Rep. Eric Anderson (Dist. 1) discussed the state's energy challenges and answered questions from the audience on energy legislation in Idaho. Other presenters included: Idaho Office of Energy Resources Administrator Paul Kjellander, Betsy Bridge with the Idaho Conservation League, CAES Director Harold Blackman, Constance White from the Western Renewable Energy Generation Information System, Utah Transit Authority Chief Operating Officer Jerry Benson, Rocky Mountain Power President Richard Walje and Idaho Public Utilities Commissioner Marsha Smith.

Faculty and researchers from the CAES institutions returned on day two of the summit to work in small groups generating research ideas that could benefit energy policy development. The teams focused on seven areas for research ideas: policy decision-making, supply side, demand side, energy/water nexus, carbon management, energy economics, and systems and analysis. Their objectives included developing scope of work for potential energy policy research project ideas and forming project teams capable of continuing the development of these ideas after the workshop.

Potential research projects discussed were:

- Evaluation of renewable portfolio standards (RPS) in other states, national policies on RPS and their potential effect on Idaho,
- Development of a regional energy supply life-cycle analysis,
- Creation of a public opinion survey to evaluate perception of risk for various energy options, the source of these attitudes and the level of knowledge of energy options,
- Study of the integration of energy generation technologies, options and their potential impacts,
- Development of a methodology for analyzing energy options, and
- Creation of a classroom game on energy systems.

The summit took an important first step toward building a research community on energy policy within the Center for Advanced Energy Studies.



INL Director John Grossenbacher delivers the keynote address at the Energy Policy Institute's summit in Boise.

The next steps include transferring the research ideas into a scope of work format and generating funding proposals in order to move forward on applied research to tackle energy-related challenges.

Visit the [Energy Policy Institute website](#).

Read coverage of the summit from the [Idaho Statesman](#).

Read a transcript of [John Grossenbacher's keynote address](#).

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